

## Member's Quarterly

Summer 2016 Edition

### President's Message

# Watch Out for the Z Generation

*Better entrepreneurs, more difficult to retain*

**J**ust when you thought that you had the workplace figured out, along comes a whole new cadre of workers to make your life even more interesting. This time it's Generation Z (those born between 1994 and 2010) who will take your place of work by storm. By the end of the day, you won't know if you've been shaken or stirred, but you will want to de-stress.

Unless you are planning to retire this year, there's almost no way to avoid the phenomenon that is this new generation. They are coming in numbers, beginning in 2015 when the first wave of twenty million will hit the workplace in the United States, and another seven million join them in Canada. Once again, you will have to adjust your recruitment and retention strategies as well as your management techniques in order to herd these cats in some form of order and good government, at least at work.

The differences between this generation and the one previous could not be more startling. Just when you've adjusted to Gen Y who are all about the money, along come these Gen Z'ers who are looking for meaning in their lives and in their work. They will move through a series of different jobs in their quest to find something they care about, rather than settling for a stable career that is unfulfilling. That's a noble ambition, but it's much easier to pay a little more to get people to work harder than it is to help them find enlightenment at work.

The good news about Gen Z that's starting to emerge from studies and research is that the Z Generation is also much more entrepreneurial than their older brothers and sisters. They also appear to be more loyal and open-minded. Those are good things to know because you can tailor compensation packages based on these traits. Given the pace at which the world keeps changing, it will be good to have at least one group of workers who are willing to try new things when they are encouraged to do so.

This next generation of workers will also enter the workplace at a time when the world and the economy all feel a little less secure (because they are) than for previous generations. This will lower their expectations in terms of overall compensation, benefits and job security. However, growing up in this latest era will also make them less willing to trust the system and therefore much harder to retain, especially if they see an opportunity to branch out on their own.

But the biggest challenge of dealing with a new generation at work is trying to find a place for the newbies while reassuring all the older workers that their positions in the system are secure. Once again, managers at all levels will be asked to officiate, mediate and referee disputes between the generations, all the while trying to produce quality products and services for the new economy.

Good luck with Generation Z.

*Brian Pascal is President of IPM [Institute of Professional Management].*



Brian W. Pascal  
President